

## Contributed

### THE CHURCH MOULDING HISTORY.

By Rev. Henry Wade DuBoise, D. D.

In this new age, in which we have been living since the great war convulsed the world and shook its foundations, some facts that were not formerly understood have come to be compellingly apparent. Among the signal discoveries of the age, I think we must count the discovery, or the rediscovery, or at least the entirely new appreciation of

#### The Power of An Idea.

We have learned that the real dynamics of history are not armies and navies and dynasties, but ideas. We have come to realize that the greatest force that humanity can employ is not dynamite, nor lyddite, nor T.N.T., but a thought, convincingly impressed upon the minds of men. We have learned that propaganda is more powerful than artillery. The German imperial army, the mightiest army that the world ever saw, was defeated by the moral idealism of the world. For four years torrents of high explosives fell on the Hindenburg line in vain, but when the conscience of Christendom had been marshalled and mobilized against German Imperialism, largely under the influence of that great field marshal of truth and righteousness who sat in the American White House, the Hindenburg line quivered and broke.

The dynamic idea is not an idea enshrouded in fine language, and entombed in a book-shelf, but an idea injected into the heads of common every-day people—an idea that has gotten rooted in the daily thought and daily talk of merchants and farmers and drummers; an idea that has become a staple stock in trade with editors and magazine writers; that has made itself at home in the brains of preachers and school teachers, and has entrenched itself in the reporter's pencil. An idea that has so become current in human thought and life is the mightiest dynamic known to science or history.

#### History in Solution.

The thinking of a nation is its history in solution. The history of a nation is the crystallization of its thinking. Under the domination of the Hohenzollerns, the German people thought militarism for fifty years, and Germany became an armed camp. Under the heel of the Romanoffs the Russian people thought anarchy for fifty years, and Russia became a social chaos. From her beginnings in this virgin continent, with the Bible for her chart of life, America has thought in terms of liberty and righteousness, and America stands before the world today as, in the main, a champion of democracy and international justice. The history of today was born of the thinking of yesterday. And by the same logic, the history of tomorrow will be born of the thinking of today.

The chief concern, therefore, of any patriot should be a concern for the thinking of his people. What ideas are dominant in the minds of men? What moral ideals hold sway? What conceptions of today are shaping the conscience of the present and of the rising generation? Are we going to hand down to our children a great spiritual philosophy of life, born of God's truth; or, are we going to bequeath to them a pagan philosophy of life, born of human selfishness? Destiny depends on the answer to these questions. And that is the root of this whole Christian Education Program, that since the war has sprung up with incredible vigor all over America. It is not a new

program, but it is the sudden renaissance of a program that is vindicated on all the finest pages of Christian history.

#### Potent Agencies.

Now, there are certain great agencies that largely mould the thought of a nation. There is the press. The power of the press for weal or woe is tremendous, and on the increase. I was impressed with a remark made the other day by a journalistic writer of my acquaintance. He said, "There is no longer any news. There is only propaganda." All the world has learned the power of organized publicity.

Another channel through which ideas potentially dynamic become current and dominant in the life of a nation is the pulpit. The influence of the pulpit may not be so predominant and unique as it has been in generations past. But it remains and must remain a great channel of influence. Not very long ago there appeared in the editorial column of one of the great Eastern dailies this sentence: "The man of the hour in America today is the minister of the Gospel."

But pre-eminent among the agencies that direct the thought of a nation is, and must always be, the school. This is patently true, because under modern conditions practically the entire population passes through the schools, and passes through the schools at the time of life when ideas most readily and most tenaciously take root. Two generations ago the father of the recent German Emperor asked the philosopher Humboldt for advice as to the reorganization of Germany and German life. The philosopher replied, "Whatever you would put into the state, you must first put into the schools." The German Emperor acted upon that advice, and the issue has justified its accuracy. Lloyd George has said: "The most formidable foe we had to fight in Germany was not the arsenals of Krupp or the yards in which they turned out submarines, but the schools of Germany." The schools constitute the one agency through which in a single generation you can change the philosophy and life of a whole nation. Put militarism into the schools, and you will have a militaristic state. Put materialism into the schools, and you will have a materialistic nation. Put infidelity into the schools, and you will have a nation of agnostics. Put positive, vital Christianity into the schools, and you will have a Christian nation. That is not theory. That is history.

#### The Root of the Matter.

Now then, it is apparent that if you can control these influential agencies, you will largely dominate, for good or ill, the life of the whole nation. But one says, "That is a large contract." To be sure it is, but not so formidable as it superficially appears. The crucial fact is this: The press, the pulpit, the schools and other professions which in any degree direct the thinking of the nation are directed in their thinking by a few hundred thousand of highly trained men and women. And these brilliant and trained leaders of the influential professions are almost without exception the intellectual product of our institutions of higher learning. And that is not theory. It is fact backed by statistical evidence. The college men and women of America are going to be the makers or the breakers of America. Dr. Athearn, an eminent authority, opens his book on "A National System of Education" with these sentences: "Four thousand two hundred college professors caused the Great World War. Four thousand two hundred college professors can cause another World War. In the last analysis the destiny of any nation is determined by the schoolmasters of that nation." These are the facts, providentially impressed

upon this generation, that are responsible for this whole Christian Education Revival. What are the churches trying to do? Are they undertaking to educate the masses of the American people? No, but they are undertaking to educate leaders for the masses. The Church has suddenly awakened to a vision. The Church has conceived it to be her mission to provide institutions in which her choicest youth will be trained for leadership in the influential professions and other walks of life, and from which they will go out, not only with the best mental equipment that the age can provide, but also saturated with the spiritual idealism of the Gospel of God. It is a master stroke of Christian strategy. America is in desperate need of an increasing supply of Christian ministers, and Christian teachers, and Christian authors, and Christian journalists, and Christian lawyers, and Christian statesmen, and Christian captains of industry. And the Church is arousing herself to meet the demand!

Danville, Va.

#### FLOWERS.

By Mrs. Florence W. Flournoy.

I love the florist's windows,  
As I walk along Broadway.  
They have a helpful message upon a winter's day.  
They speak right to my spirit,  
And this is what they say:  
"Like flowers of the Kingdom  
That Jesus saw within,  
We come to tell God's mercy,  
To lift your thoughts from sin.  
Won't God that makes such beauty,  
To glorify the earth,  
Give flowers of joy and love and trust,  
To help His Kingdom's birth?"

"So buy a little flower,  
And pay in humble joy,  
'Twill help you find God's Kingdom here  
The flower is just a toy  
To teach God's love and beauty,  
And show you how to find  
The flower of His Spirit,  
The beauties of His mind."  
New York, N. Y.

#### MODERN THOUGHT.

By Rev. S. M. Logan.

People all over this country have been awakened to a new interest in questions affecting their religious faith. It is a time of great danger and of opportunity. Of course, a good deal depends on the leadership of the Church. We would like to know where our preachers, teachers and professors in colleges and theological seminaries stand. The people have a right to know it, and every man ought to be more than glad to state positively his position.

The authority of God's Word is questioned. Nothing is gained by evading the issue. The attitude of apology for the Scriptures is neither reassuring nor inspiring. The complaint comes from too many sources to doubt that there are unsound teachers and preachers in all the Christian denominations, North, East and West. It is a good time to revive the word "orthodoxy."

Why should we hesitate to require for our young people leaders who think right? A trust has been committed to fathers and mothers which they cannot delegate to another. As intelligent Christians they are endowed as no others are for that trust, and it is their duty to choose the men who are to teach and preach to their children and to decide on the institutions where their boys and girls are to be trained. If any of these stand for anything but the old faith, they are rather expensive objects of benevolences.